Book Review

The Whaling Season: An Inside Account of the Struggle to Stop Commercial Whaling
Kieran Mulvaney
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Abstract
It is hard to believe there is still a call for books like Kieran Mulvaney’s The Whaling Season: An Inside Account of the Struggle to Stop Commercial Whaling. With the populations of many whale species still in danger of total collapse due to numerous environmental pressures, the resumption of legal commercial whaling seems unthinkable. Yet, as Mulvaney points out in his book, there has been a strong effort in recent years on the part of whaling nations like Japan, Norway and Iceland to resume the hunting of minke, sei and other whales. Thus, books such as Mulvaney’s are still necessary to bring the issue of whaling to the public’s attention. The balance of The Whaling Season, unfortunately, is a hit-or-miss affair. The historical sections provide a solid overview of their subjects and add heft to a book that might otherwise be lacking in that regard. By contrast, the International Whaling Commission chapters too often become a dry recitation of dates and vote tallies. The advantage of a book like The Whaling Season is that there is room enough for both the short and long views, and from both perspectives, Mulvaney succeeds in making his case to the general reader. If in fact, as Mulvaney speculates, "we are witnessing … the last defiant death throes" of an "unmourned and unloved" industry, we have Greenpeace and Mulvaney in part to thank for it. If, instead, we are on the brink of a revival of commercial whaling in our time, a book like The Whaling Season could become an important document in future efforts to bring this ugly chapter in the planet’s